

Fun At School

Some random kid-related stuff to report...

First, my “visitor” showed up to my Sunday morning class. I haven’t had the time to blog about it, but basically there is a parent who came to drop her daughter off a few weeks ago at the worst time possible, and the kids were all over the place (it’s not normally like that, a set of circumstances culminated to create the ‘perfect storm’ – long story). On top of that, her daughter is a 1st grader, which means that she has just come over to the north campus of church. Our first graders “graduate” from the preschool wing and move over to the other building when they get in 1st grade, and their curriculum changes. So this parent had concerns about what her daughter was learning and specifically where her weekly “coloring page” was. So she asked if she could come “observe” my class, and I was all upset and nervous. I sat and pondered this, I prayed about it, and I decided to give it my best shot and show this mother what a wonderful childrens’ ministry we have. I wasn’t even nervous, and I used the entire ride home from Illinois planning out my lesson for class the next day. And what happens? She is a no-show. Fast forward to the next week, which was in reality this past Sunday, and she shows up. Luckily I had kind of figured this would happen, so I was well-prepared again. But I also had 9 kids to look after – of course she couldn’t come observe when I had 4 kids last week when games and lessons are much easier... But I think it went well! I can’t speak for the “observer”, but the class ran as smoothly as it could have with 9 kids running around. She wasn’t just a statue standing in the corner making me nervous during class, but an active participant (after some encouragement by me) in the crafts and games. It is my hope that she came away from experiencing her daughter’s Sunday school knowing that our childrens’ ministry program at church is wonderful! We have so many components (there is music,

dancing, skits, big group games, small group games, storytelling and crafts – all in one hour every week!) and super volunteers who bring it all together which provides a variety of ways for kids to learn one lesson and virtue. I am so proud of how well my 1st graders are picking up on this month's virtue, which is "initiative". I know, a huge word for such small kids, but the lessons are broken down and relate to kids so well that they really are getting it – especially my 1st grader at home, which really surprises me!! So anyway, I just wanted to express my relief about how I don't have to worry about my "visitor" anymore. At first I was terribly upset, but after a lot of thinking and praying, it all worked out for the better! I was able to step back and take a look at our childrens' ministry and appreciate it even more when it was under scrutiny, so I am very thankful to God for opening my eyes and getting me through this.

Next bit of kid news – last week was National Eat Lunch at School week, so us parents were invited to eat with the littles. My husband and I folded ourselves into the kiddie-sized lunch tables and visited with the 1st graders. One problem I didn't see coming though – we brought little brother (he is 2), so of course he starts running around the lunchroom, but... Mom and Dad were so crammed into the little lunch tables that we could not get up to chase him unless someone else got up first – we were packed in like sardines! Finally we were able to get out and get him before he caused too much trouble, and we had a great time for the remainder of the lunch. I think Sammie really enjoyed haaving her family at lunch. Here are my 3 youngest at 'big kid' first grade lunch:



And at recess it was so neat to see some of my 1st graders from Sunday morning childrens' ministry!!

So after lunch in 1st grade, it was time to head to the fire station for a field trip with my preschool-age daughter and her class. I brought my 2-year-old along to this also because I thought he would enjoy it, and he did, even if it was a challenge trying to get him to hold still while the fireman was talking. But as soon as the fire gear came out and the fireman began to put on his boots, gloves, hood, hat, etc, my son was very attentive. After that, each of the kids got a turn "driving" the fire truck! My son made his way up to the front of the group and reached his arms toward the fireman – it was really neat to see because a few of the pre-schoolers, one being my daughter, were nervous about being lifted up by the firefighter and into the big fire truck. But once they saw the little dude have a turn and how much he loved it, they were all eager to try too!





So overall a great week! October is always so busy for our family, but I enjoy every minute of it!!

Is Lakeview Terrace Fireproof?

I saw the movie [Lakeview Terrace](#) yesterday, and I decided to merge it with the title of another movie, Fireproof, for my post title because Fireproof almost stole the show.

An action thriller starring [Samuel L. Jackson](#), Lakeview Terrace is about a tough Los Angeles cop who does not like his new neighbors, seemingly because they are an interracial couple. He makes indirect threats, among other things, and the couple has trouble at first determining whether or not they're making something of nothing. As the tension escalates however, it soon becomes clear that their neighbor is in fact mentally unstable, and as he comes closer and closer to cracking, the couple has no one to call for help because of the camaraderie between police officers known as the "blue wall of silence". The movie was entertaining to watch; it wasn't as good as I had hoped but just as good as I expected – one of those movies where they showed most of the good parts

in the previews. It was very predictable yet also very good at establishing mood throughout. For instance, at times, the tension that was built in the movie – and the theater – was so thick you could have cut it with a knife. They did a nice job of setting the mood of the neighborhood also; a nice homey-like cul-de-sac, complete with barking dog nestled in the California hills gave it both a nice family feeling and also played up the isolation factor. I thought Samuel L. Jackson was really good in this movie – the way he delivered some of his lines was effective in subtly portraying his disdain for his neighbors. And the reason for his racial prejudices was surprising and an interesting addition to the plot. The movie did put the spotlight on many racial issues in a thought-provoking manner.

Overall, a very entertaining movie, even though some of the events that I think were meant to surprise the audience did not because the movie was predictable. The other criticisms I have with it are that none of the characters were likable – it was difficult to root for the couple who was being picked on by Jackson because they each had some serious character flaws. Also, it was not believable that an LA cop would have enough money to be able to afford the house where he resided – nestled in the hills outside of Los Angeles, the houses featured in the movie had spectacular views, gorgeous landscaping, and the neighbors had a beautiful in-ground pool. How the neighbor could afford what would probably be a multi-million dollar house as his “starter home” on a grocery store management position’s salary, I do not know. Hey, Jamiahsh, when you get your house in the hills of LA with your in-ground pool and luxury patio furniture, can we visit?

Another thing I found strange about Lakeview Terrace was the impending wildfire that threatened the neighborhood – I didn’t see the point in it. Maybe to further illustrate the isolation the couple felt as their neighbor tormented them? I don’t know, but it fits in well with the title of my post

because of another movie that's coming out called [Fireproof](#). As we bought our tickets, the worker at the movie theater asked if we had heard of Fireproof and gave us a flier. We hadn't heard a word about it, and she said that some church bought up all the vouchers they were selling for the movie. They weren't going to get the movie if they didn't sell enough vouchers, but apparently they sold well over what they expected. I was intrigued because I hadn't heard of the movie before and wondered why it was getting so much underground buzz. Since we got home late last night and went right to bed, before I had a chance to look it up it was talked about on the Dr. Phil show this morning. Apparently it stars [Kirk Cameron](#), and it's about a firefighter who tries to save his marriage by doing a 40-day experiment called "The Love Dare". Hmmm, I still don't really get it, but I think it's neat that it's getting so much buzz without being a mainstream movie and showing previews and all that jazz. It's supposed to be a really good movie, thought provoking and well-written, and that isn't just coming from Kirk Cameron – it's on [imdb.com](#). Hopefully it will be at the theater for longer than its limited run so I can check it out. A bit of interesting trivia I found out about it – Kirk Cameron made a promise to [Chelsea Noble](#), his wife of 17 years that he wouldn't ever kiss another woman, on screen or off. So in the part of the movie where they needed a shot of him kissing his movie wife, his real wife was a stand-in so they could get the shot of the husband and wife kissing. I think it's sweet, but some people used it as a reason to pick on [Cameron saying he doesn't understand acting...](#) Oh, well, you can't please everyone!